

**Congress of the United States**

**Washington, DC 20515**

April 3, 2009

The Honorable David Obey  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, and Education  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Todd Tiahrt  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services and Education  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Tiahrt:

We are writing to express our strong support for an increase of \$2 million in funding for the CDC for the addition of a question to the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) regarding sexual orientation and gender identity.

Federal health surveys serve not only as the nation's method for gathering data about its populace, but also the method by which disparities and differences are recognized and addressed in subpopulations. Currently, these surveys collect data on a range of demographic information, including age, sex, race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status. These demographics are used in conjunction with behavioral data to determine funding and program priorities for federal, state, and local government. Unfortunately, sexual orientation and gender identity measures are omitted from surveys, leaving the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) communities with a lack of tools to assess and improve its health. One of the most odious omissions is the fact that the NHIS, the federal government's most comprehensive and influential survey, does not currently include a sexual orientation/gender identity question.

Inclusion of this question would allow health researchers, LGBT community organizations and government agencies to better assess the health and wellness issues impacting the LGBT community and individuals. In addition, it would allow both private and public funds to better target evidence-driven LGBT health programs. Further, it would serve as a benchmark for key federal health policy documents that currently identify some LGBT health disparities but rely on unconventional data sources for support, including Healthy People 2010 and the developing Healthy People 2020. The Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary's Advisory Committee of Healthy People 2020 has already highlighted the need for improved data collection in the LGBT community.

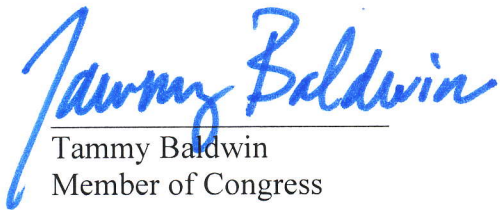
A survey question that asks about LGBT identity has already been developed and tested according to NCHS standards. Therefore, adding this question would require only \$2

million in new money for NHIS in the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) budget. This includes question testing, updating surveys, training interviewers, and compiling and analyzing data.

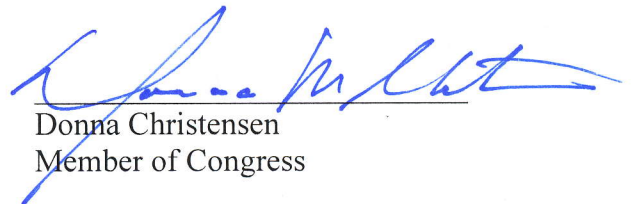
Considering the positive impact this inclusion could have on the health of the LGBT community, the undersigned ask that the Committee provide \$2,000,000 to the National Health Interview Survey to collect data regarding the sexual orientation and gender identity of survey respondents using tested methods for doing so with the greatest possible accuracy.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

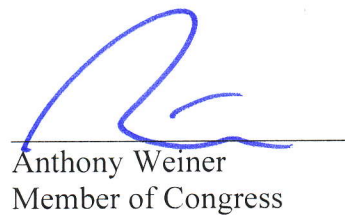
Sincerely,



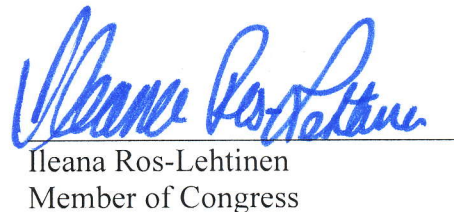
Tammy Baldwin  
Member of Congress



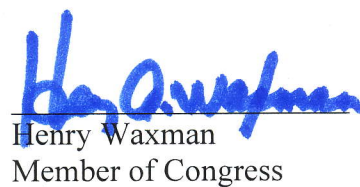
Donna Christensen  
Member of Congress



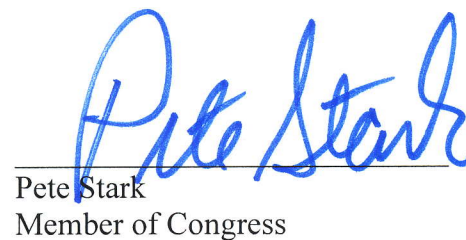
Anthony Weiner  
Member of Congress



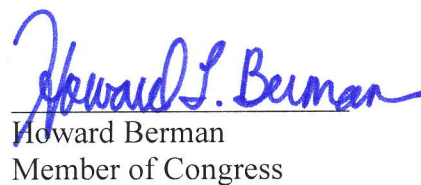
Ileana Ros-Lehtinen  
Member of Congress



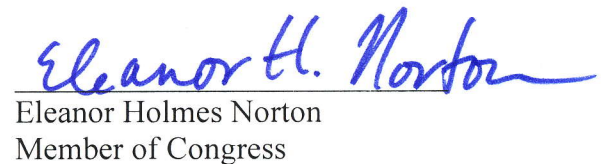
Henry Waxman  
Member of Congress



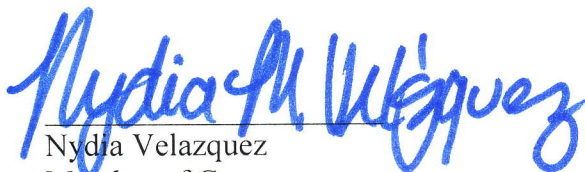
Pete Stark  
Member of Congress

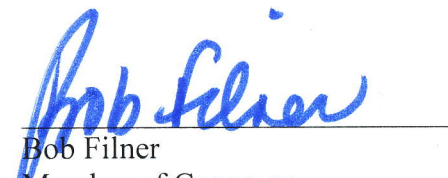


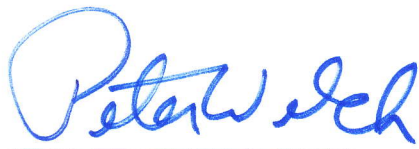
Howard Berman  
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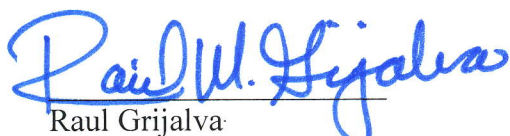
Eleanor Holmes Norton  
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Nydia Velazquez  
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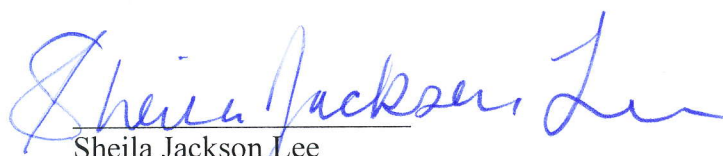
  
Bob Filner  
Member of Congress

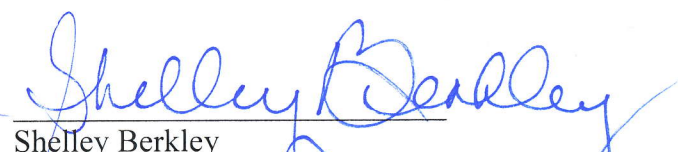
  
Peter Welch  
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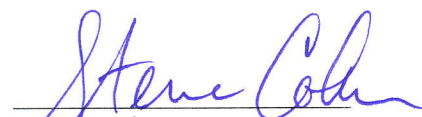
  
Phil Hare  
Member of Congress

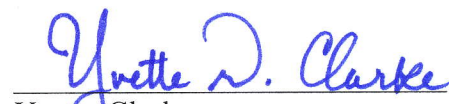
  
Raul Grijalva  
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Robert Wexler  
Member of Congress

  
Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress

  
Shelley Berkley  
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Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress

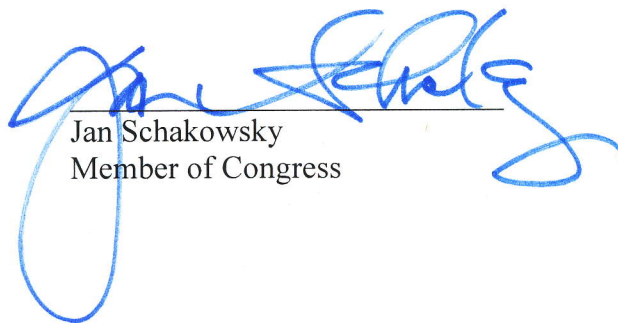
  
Yvette Clarke  
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Edolphus Towns  
Member of Congress

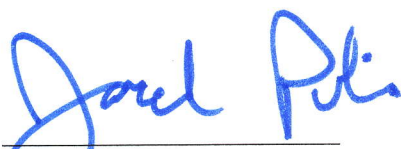




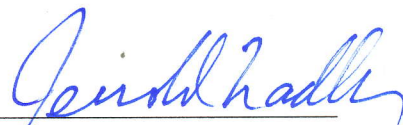
Earl Blumenauer  
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Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



Jared Polis  
Member of Congress



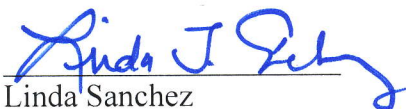
Jerry Nadler  
Member of Congress



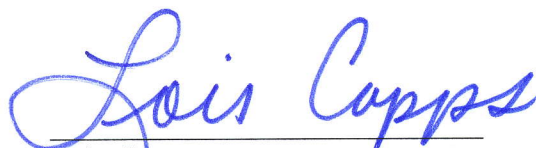
Jim McDermott  
Member of Congress



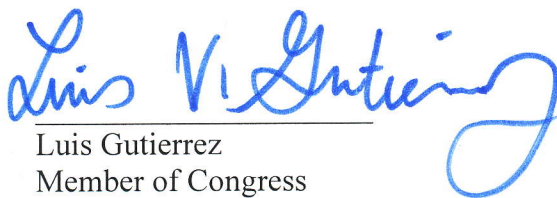
Keith Ellison  
Member of Congress



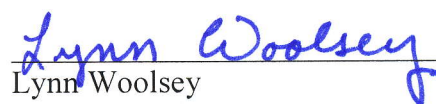
Linda Sanchez  
Member of Congress



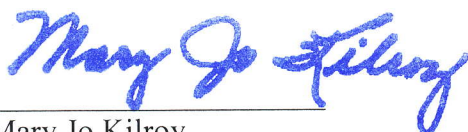
Lois Capps  
Member of Congress



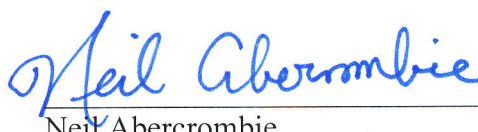
Luis Gutierrez  
Member of Congress



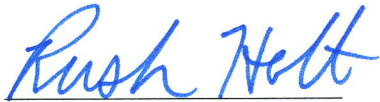
Lynn Woolsey  
Member of Congress



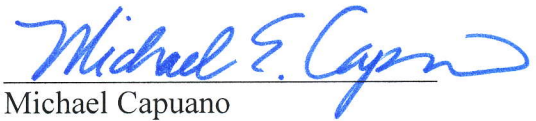
Mary Jo Kilroy  
Member of Congress



Neil Abercrombie  
Member of Congress



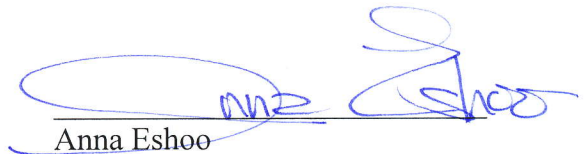
Rush Holt  
Member of Congress



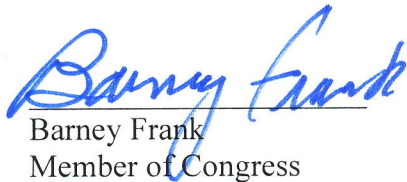
Michael Capuano  
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Andre Carson  
Member of Congress



Anna Eshoo  
Member of Congress



Barney Frank  
Member of Congress



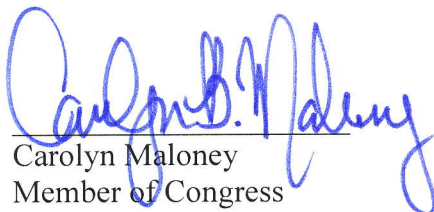
Bill Delahunt  
Member of Congress



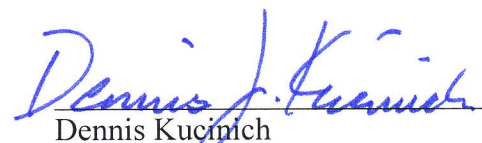
Brad Sherman  
Member of Congress



David Wu  
Member of Congress



Carolyn Maloney  
Member of Congress



Dennis Kucinich  
Member of Congress